AN ANSWER To a Scandalous Pamphlet, ENTITULED A LETTER TO A DISSENTER CONCERNING His MAJESTIES LATE Declaration of Indulgence, &c.

SIR,

I Being a *Dissenter*, your Letter was delivered to Me, whether by mistake, or no, I cannot tell, nor shall examine; But this I am sure of, That it concerns all sorts of Men under that Denomination, to consider, as well the End to which your Councils tend, as the Motives from whence they Spring.

It is no ways material to them whether *Fear*, *Interest*, *Resentment*, or pure *Politicks* undertakes to be their Guide, but

to what they are driving, and they ought to be careful of their *Conductor*, when to miss the right way to Repose, leads to no less than perpetual Ruine and Misery. You confess you differ in Opinion from *Dissenters*, and consequently are within the Rale of *Conformity*; wherefore you must not wonder if your *Sincerity*, *Friendship*, and *Charity* be doubted: You are at present, disarmed of your dangerous Weapons, the *Penal* and *Sanguinary Laws*, therefore your Fury is not now felt; But can you think the memory of Seven and Twenty years sorrowful Sufferings will not last half a one, or that they who have had such woful experience of your Brotherly Love to the sub-division of *Protestants*, must not be jealous at least of your Officious Friendship at present, and what sort of *Us* your *Arguments are necessary to preserve.*

It cannot be such to whom your Party have constantly imputed the *Exclusion*, and *Rebellion*; for the condition of those you confess calls *for present Ease*: And now their immediate Cure is prescribed by the only Physician on Earth for that Distemper, you would perswade them to refuse to take it, for fear their Enemies should grow Sick with Envy at their wonderful Recovery. But if they be Infatuated to that degree as to take your Council, let me beg this Favour for them in their future Miseries, That they may be removed from the Collum of ill Men, to that of Mad; for they who possess such Publick Spirits as to be delighted with Eternal Torments, and Miseries for the *Preservation* of their only Enemies, ought at least to be relax'd from the Infamy of their Sufferings.

But I have heard strong Proofs offered by *Dissenters*, to lay both the *Exclusion* and *Rebellion* to the charge of some very Zealous *Conformers*; And did not your un-intelligible, as well as much repented Doctrine of *Non-resistance* dis-heard all unsuccessful *Rebels* from being *Church of England-Men*, it would be hard to distinguish them from the most active *Parrators* you have.

But passing over all Reflections differing Parties are apt to make on one another, we will consider the Two parts of your

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Advice, with this assurance, That I believe the new Friendship has no *Fondness* in it, and is as you say, *to be suspected*, and consequently Examined; But whether in your Method, or no, remains a Question.

We will take for granted, That the common Interest of the Establish'd Church, and His Majesties Royal Predecessors in the four last Reigns had so joyn'd them together, that it had been as well unnatural, as undutiful in the *Roman Catholicks* to have made Court to any other Party of the Nation, And it had, (perhaps) been as Imprudent in His Majesty not to proffer them the first Fruits of His Favour and Protection; that being no ways inconsistant with the Kindness He intended to those of His own Communion, nor the *Indulgence* He always designed to His other Peaceable *Dissenting* Subjects: But how ungratefully He has been dealt with by the Established Church, for His Generous Condescentions and Complements, I will not repeat, because as you say, *What is unnecessary, must be tedious*; And the truth of this Assertion is so plain, that could it admit of a Dispute, your Letter would put an end to it, for it is in well Composed Sentences, and Periods, the Universal Voice of the Party who have much (against his will) forc'd the *King* to discern, that their magnify'd Loyalty was meerly their Interest, and that they were Disciples of the Crown only for the Loaves. He must too at last perceive, that the severity of the Laws made against the very Nature of the *Reformation*, to force a Conformity to a Fallible Authority, compell'd *Protestant Dissenters* to seek for Relief from Rebellion, having Examples of success in that method to their Brethren in Foreign Countries, as well as their Fatal prevailing thereby at Home: But to the Honour of them, let this truth be remembred, That their Natural Prince on His Promise of *Liberty of Conscience*, was most dear to them all, and made them with Universal Joy, like true *English-Men*, bring Him back with Triumph to His Dominions, from whence their Swords, and Interest had driven Him: Nor can it be believ'd, they would ever have had Recourse to their Swords again for the Remedy, if they had not found their old Disease, *Oppression* return.

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As to the *Alliance betwixt Liberty, and Infallibility* which you are pleased to Redicule, it seems to the *Dissenters* no such impossible thing as you would perswade them, when mutual Interest is the Sement of the League: For tho' it should be true, that a Church which pretends to *Infallibility*, cannot in its own Nature, consent to the Propagation of Errour: Yet Experience shews by *Holland* and many other places, that the Members of such a Church, can be Good and Friendly Neighbours with those they think in the wrong; But on the contrary side, a Church that had its only Beginning, Form, and Foundation in *Severe Sanguinary* and *Penal Laws* for Extirpation of the Religion they found in Possession, and for preventing any other whatsoever but its own, and yet pretending to no *Infallibility*, but its Power: It is hard, I say, to believe such a Church can willingly part with its only Supporter, *Force*: And therefore there is a necessity, where there is a Warrantable Opportunity for all Parties they would *Oppress*, to joyn together to put it out of their Power to do it.

Protestant Dissenters, are by their Lawful Prince put in Possession of *Liberty*, and are invited to make that *Indulgence* lasting to them by Law, on condition all Men may share in it: You would perswade them, to cast away this Opportunity, in hopes the time may come, you will be so good natur'd to *remember the Courtesy, and not be so severe to them as you have been*, Alledging, *That the Church of* England *convinc'd of its Errour in being severe to them, the Parliament, when ever It meets, is sure to be Gentile. The next Heir Bread in the Countrey which they have so often Quoted for a Patern of* Indulgence, *a General Agreement of all thinking Men*, &c. Makes you say *all things conspire to give them Ease, and Satisfaction, if by too much haste to anticipate their good Fortune, they do not destroy it*: Pretty plausible Sophistry, to make Men neglect the present Possession of their Desires, in hopes of a future Possibility of gaining them: This plainly shews you do not believe you have to do with *Thinking Men*, for such well enough can see the difference betwixt Possession and Hopes, especially supported with Untruths: For all men know

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the *next Heir* was Bred in the Strictest Form of your Church and adheres to all the Ceremonies of it, in a Countrey where they are not only more Hated, but more Contemptible, and Ridiculous than those of the *Mass*, to which by the multitudes of *Papists* they are well accustomed; And would you make the *Dissenters* believe, That *Princess* would begin an *Indulgence* She has been Educated to think is Criminal; But if the *Dissenters* once get Possession of it under Her Royal Father, the *strong Argument of Numbers* will certainly secure them against Her recalling the Favour, as well as make it impossible for that Party, who are as you confess, *but as One to Two Hundred*, from Oppressing the common Interest of the *Whole*.

I am not willing (you see) to carp at your squinting Term of the *next Heir*: But this I must assure you in general, a more Disloyal and Dangerous Paper, both to His Majesty and His Children, did not see Day in the hottest Times of *Exclusion*; as I could easily Illustrate, but shall avoid to do so, since it becomes all true Lovers of their Country in some degree to be humble Imitators of His Sacred Majesty, whose Rock of Mercy to His People, seems impossible to be Exhausted; and whose Healing Temper gives apparently the Eye to all the Scandals His Enemies ever invented of Him to deprive Him of His Right.

The *Dissenters* have the Word of this Glorious Prince, That they shall be sure of their present Ease during His Reign; and that it shall be none of His Fault, if it be not made Perpetual to them, not only by Rescinding the Laws that can Hurt them, but also to confirm the Right of free enjoyment of Conscience to every *English* Man for ever, by a *Magna Charta*, equal to that by which they hold their Estates: And this Disinterested Favour of His Majesties, with the Infallible Security it may be confirm'd to them by: You would have them thrown away and despise, to rely upon the single Promise of *K. W.*

But *Sir*, you must, I believe, be better known before you are so fat Trusted: For though you seem *Plenipotentiary* for your Church, yet your *Credentials* may be Forg'd; and while your *Memorial* speaks plainly the Sense of your Party in the

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Scandalous Reflections it makes on His Majesties *Actions* and *Alliances*; yet it is in their Power to disown you for one of their Church, when ever it is necessary for them to Boast *Immaculate Loyalty* again: So it may happen that *T. W.* may be Hang'd for a Traytor, the *Dissenters* undone for taking his Word, and the Church of *England* still continue in its Original Innocency: A conveniency (I confess) peculiar to your Party, all others being fore'd to bear their Iniquities, and undergo the Reproach of their Brethrens Sins.

But to examin a little closer what you would be at, and what you expect from the *Dissenters:* In your Treaty, it appears to be *That they should not be so linked to their New Friends, as to Reject an Indulgence the Parliament may offer them, without comprehending the* Papists.

A very surprizing Proposal in the Circumstances of the Times, and seems, as if you would offer to restore to them that of 42. For I know no other Parliament can make good your Word, whilst His Majesty lives: But these sort of Expressions are no Sin in your Circumstances, having *Numbers* enough to back them *if they would be Laught out of their Doctrine of Non-Resistance*, His Majesties *best Security* (as you would Insinuate) *for his Crown*. But believe it *Sir*, discerning Men know this Boast of yours is but a Copy of your Countenance; for His Majesties *Indulgence* and the *Addresses* you are so troubled at, leaves your Church but a Thin Muster, should she Renounce her pretended Principle: And what you say in other parts of your Paper, proves sufficiently, that That Doctrine you would formerly have rob'd all other Churches of, to Adorn your own, is from its Ornament, become only an excuse, and will in the end prove a Thinner Covering for her Nakedness then Fig-leaves were to our Fore-Fathers shame.

If your self had not known this to be true, you had spar'd the Pains of your Ingenious Paper: But truly, I confess, you ought in this Juncture to be Indulg'd a little Liberty of Conscience too, for the Propagation of your Faith: For since you have lost the Power of *Pressing* men to your side; it is but reasonable

ſonable you ſhould be allowed to *Beat up* for *Volunteers*. For this Cauſe I ſhall ſay little more to you, either about the Reflections you make on His Majeſty, or thoſe that *Addreſs* to Him, but will cloſe up all with theſe few *Memorandums* to your next Labours.

That you take care to ſhew, what King you expect will be ſo mad to part with his undoubted Prerogative of Diſpenſing with *Penal Statutes*; when he judges it convenient for the Service of Himſelf and Kingdom, now it is Recogniz'd to be His Right by Law.

Next you are to prepare ſtrong Reaſons to induce that King to be ſuch a *Felo de ſe* to his Title and Power.

Then you are to ſhew the Uſe of the *Teſt* in matters of Places; for to a *Catholick* King it can be no Hindrance to imploy *Papiſts*, ſince he can Diſpenſe with the taking it; and to a *Proteſtant* 'tis needleſs, ſince his own Averſion to that Party, will (it may be ſuppos'd) ſufficiently Exclude them: Then ſince it can be of no Uſe in a *Papiſt* or *Proteſtant* Princes Reign; It ſeems unreaſonably Factious not to recind it at the Requeſt of a Prince, who is ready to Grant ſo many Favours in conſequence of ſuch a Repeal, and is againſt it, as it is plainly more againſt Chriſts, than his own Prerogative.

As to your ſuggeſtion againſt Repealing the *Teſt* in its *Legiſlative* uſe; let it be but Impartially conſider'd, that the Making of it did, as the Continuance of it does, ſtrike at the Root, and deſtroys the very Foundation of *Engliſh* Liberty; ſince againſt the true intent of *Magna Charta*, it deprives Men of their Birthright, without any Crime or Tryal of their *Peers*; and may be an In-let by *Faction* to all manner of Slavery. But a Recognition in Parliament, that it is void in it ſelf; for that cauſe, will not only reſtore the Nation to its true Liberty and Property; but be a Bulwark againſt the like Law for Deſtruction of any other Party, may chance to be out of faſhion.

I am, I confeſs one of thoſe *Diſſenters*, who would be glad His Majeſties Favour was turn'd into a Law, ſince there is no

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Probability any future conduct of *Catholicks* could meet with the same Circumstances to cause new Statutes to be made against them; like those, the doubtful Title of Queen *Elizabeth* occasion'd: And I hope you do not expect to be accounted a Conjurer, for finding out the Secret, to tell the other *Dissenters*, *That* Papists *themselves do not relye on the Legality of this Power to make it Perpetual*; Since it is plain, that to our Sorrow, as well as the Nations loss, We cannot hope His Majesty will be Immortal: Though to our Comfort at the same time, few of us doubt, but he will live long enough to carry his own Glory beyond any of his Predecessors; and to lay a lasting Foundation for the Felicity of his People: Which that he may do, will be the Prayers of all his Honest Subjects, as they are of one, that wishes your Polite Pen better imploy'd, then to the Disturbance of your King and Country, which is,

Sir,

Your Humble Servant.

HENRY PAYNE.

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